



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Elliot Krieger, Communications - (401) 222-8471

Embargo until: Immediate Release - December 4th, 2006

Final Report from Hope High Special Master Finds “Excellent” Progress Has Been Made

PROVIDENCE - In his fourth and final report to the Education Commissioner Peter McWalters, Hope High Complex Special Master Nicholas C. Donohue says that progress at Hope in the past eighteen months has been “enormous.”

“By any reasonable measure, progress overall at Hope is excellent,” Donohue wrote. “The immediate challenge is to maintain and accelerate the pace of change and improvement.”

To do so, he said, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) and the Providence School Department must continue to focus on Hope. Specifically, he said the state and district should try to continue to improve the attendance rate at Hope, work to create more parental involvement in education, and ensure that all students have an individual learning plan. He also said the position of Senior Teacher Leader at Hope, which has been vacant for a year, should be filled immediately.

Donohue, who completed his work as Special Master last month, praised both union and management leadership for their efforts to improve student performance at Hope.

In addition, he urged the state to provide adequate aid to the Providence School District, in particular to build staff capacity at the district office and to improve antiquated facilities at the Hope complex.

“As we work to support student achievement in the Providence schools, we at RIDE will broaden our efforts so that the accomplishments at Hope can be realized in other schools throughout the district,” said Commissioner McWalters. “While looking at the unique student learning needs in each school, we will continue to work in partnership with the Providence Public Schools to build capacity at the district level.”

In the spring of 2005, following a series of public hearings, Commissioner McWalters issues an Order of Reconstitution and Corrective Action, in which he mandated that Hope High School be reorganized into three small, autonomous learning communities. McWalters appointed Donohue as Special Master to monitor the implementation of the Order.

Donohue’s report will be posted on the RIDE Web site, www.ride.ri.gov